[English]

Reduction of Staff of B.C.C.L.

4538. PROF. RITA VERMA : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether the B.C.C.L. proposed to reduce the number of its employees and workers;

(b) if so, the number of employees and workers proposed to be reduced in B.C.C.L. during the next five years; and

(c) the likely affects of this scheme on the production of coal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) and (b). Bharat Coking Coal Limited (BCCL) proposes its manpower reduction during the next five years as under :

Year	Proposed reduction in manpower (in Nos.)
1997-1998	2920
1998-1999	4046
1999-2000	3619
2000-2001	6058
2001-2002	4566

(c) Proposed reduction of manpower is unlikely to have any adverse impact on the coal production programme of the company.

Decontrol of Cement

4539. SHRI B.L. SHANKAR : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have ever assessed the affects of decontrol of cement;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the findings thereof; and

(c) the steps the Government propose to take up ensure that the prices of cement remain within the reach of common man?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b). With the decontrol of price and distribution of cement industry in March, 1989 and delicensing in July, 1991, the cement industry has recorded a remarkable growth. The installed capacity has almost doubled and the industry has modernised and upgraded its technology to a great extent. The country had been importing cement till the first half of 1980's for meeting the increasing demand. The position has now been reversed and the country has been exporting large quantities of cement. India is now the fourth largest producer of cement in the World. The quality of cement produced in the country is also comparable to the best in the World.

(c) While the price and distribution of cement have been decontrolled, Government is encouraging creation of additional installed capacity and higher production of cement in order to strengthen competitiveness in the market. Government is allocating rail wagons to the cement industry on priority basis for movement of cement from surplus to deficit areas. Concessional excise duty has been extended to mini cement plants which operate mainly in remote and rural areas.

Insurance Cover to Bank Frauds

4540. SHRI I.D. SWAMI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether General Insurance Corporation has been paying to the public sector and private sector banks the money they have been losing in cases of frauds/cheating etc.;

(b) if so, the quantum of money so paid to the banks in the last three years, year-wise and bank-wise; and

(c) the procedure adopted before making payments to ensure that the losses suffered by the banks were beyond their control and there was no connivance, abetment direct or indirect and laxity on the part of the bank officials in checking those losses?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (c). The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Import of Cement Bags by Cement Factories

4541. SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN : Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether cement bags are being imported by the State Government for Cement Corporations run by States and Union Government; and

(b) if so, the details of such imports during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN) : (a) and (b). Data regarding procurement of bags by individual cement plants is not maintained centrally.